

**Scrutinizing Internal and External
Dimensions of European Law**

**Les dimensions internes et externes
du droit européen à l'épreuve**

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European Foreign Policy beyond Lisbon

The Quest for Relevance

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The quest for relevance is one of the main and most neglected challenges for both EU foreign policy and the academic analysis of the EU's foreign policy. Adopting an outside-in approach is one of the possible remedies to tackle the risk of an increasing irrelevance of EU foreign policy and of the academic analysis of this policy. These two main arguments are further developed in this chapter, followed by recommendations for the European External Action Service (EEAS) and by some reflections on recent and future dynamics in the College of Europe.

This chapter is an extended and adapted version of the Inaugural Lecture of the Chairholder of the TOTAL Chair of EU Foreign Policy, Stephan Keukeleire, given at the College of Europe in Bruges on 9 March 2011.

1. Challenges to the Relevance of EU Foreign Policy

This chapter puts forward the proposition that both the practice of EU foreign policy (by politicians, diplomats and civil servants) and the analysis of EU foreign policy (by scholars) risk becoming increasingly irrelevant if they remain too Brussels- and EU-oriented, focussed excessively on the political and institutional dimension of foreign policy and international relations, and using the West's developmental trajectories too much as a point of reference for approaching other countries and regions in the world.

At first sight, there may seem to be no need to be concerned about the EU's relevance. The EU is one of the major trade powers and has concluded agreements and partnerships with most countries and regional organisations in the world. Brussels is, together with Washington, one

of the world's most important diplomatic centres, with most countries having a diplomatic accreditation to the EU. The EU itself has diplomatic representations in around 130 countries, equalling the number of Embassies of the EU's three largest member states. Also testifying to the EU's relevance for the outside world is the continuous flow of high level visitors to Brussels as well as the impressive travel agenda of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission. However, despite this quite reassuring picture, we can point to dynamics which increasingly question the relevance of EU foreign policy – on a global level, on a regional level, and on a societal and individual level.

On a global level, the EU is confronted with the emergence of new constellations of power which are formed in Asia and the “Global South” in general, reflecting an “irresistible shift to the East” and South.¹ These include not only an increasingly dynamic China, but also various other emerging powers as well as increasingly relevant multilateral settings in which Europe is absent, such as the BRICS, IBSA, BASIC, APEC.² This poses a dual challenge to the EU. Firstly, these emerging powers are increasingly influential and relevant in parts of the world where the EU has traditionally been quite active, though not always effective (such as Sub-Sahara Africa) – thus presenting themselves as relevant competitors for the EU and its member states.³ Secondly, the emerging countries gradually reshape international rules of the game and reshuffle the international balance of power, as apparent in recent negotiations on the financial crisis, global warming and development cooperation. They are equally challenging the interpretation of multilateralism promoted by the EU in terms of both content (with a prioritisation of economic growth and development over other policy objectives) and methodology (with a prioritisation of non-binding commitments and respect for national sovereignty).⁴

On a regional level, in the EU's immediate neighbourhood, competing powers and competing political, economic, societal and ideational

models are increasingly defying the EU's presence, attractiveness and legitimacy. This is also reflected in the mixed results of the European Neighbourhood Policy, launched by the EU in 2004-05.⁵ To the East, in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus, Russia asserts itself as the main challenger to the EU. To the South, the EU has to face the growing influence and popularity of a wide range of Islamic movements and parties in the various countries of the Mediterranean and the Middle East.⁶

This relates to the questions about the EU's relevance for the individual and societal levels: what is the EU actually able to offer to people and societies in other parts of the world? Although the EU continuously emphasizes “human rights” in its policies, it gives the impression of caring much less about the broader “human security”⁷ situation of individuals and about the concrete socio-economic situation which affects the daily life of individuals. The EU's limited attention to unemployment, poverty and social policy in the ENP is in this sense illuminating. As Martin correctly notes, “even after the evidence and experience of the 2011 social revolts in the Mediterranean neighbourhood, the EU does not consider social policy (and by extension also social justice) as a key dimension of stability and security in its neighbourhood”.⁸

Taken together, there is a considerable gap between, on the one hand, the EU's comprehensive foreign policy toolbox and broad range of policy initiatives, strategies and partnerships towards other parts of the world and, on the other, the EU's capacity to use these as a lever to realize changes that are also relevant for people, societies and states in other parts of the world within the changing international context.⁹ This

¹ Mahbubani, K., *The New Asian Hemisphere. The irresistible shift of global power to the East*, New York, Public Affairs, 2008.

² Keukeleire, S. and Bruyninckx, H., “The European Union, the BRICs and the emerging new world order”, in C. Hill and M. Smith (eds.), *International Relations and the European Union*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 380-403; Keukeleire, S. et al., *The EU Foreign Policy towards the BRICS and other Emerging Powers: Objectives and Strategies*, Brussels, European Parliament DG External Policies, 2011.

³ See, for instance, Cheru, F. and Obi, C., *The rise of China and India in Africa*, New York, Zed Books, 2010.

⁴ Keukeleire and Bruyninckx, *supra*, note 2, pp. 397-401.

⁵ See Lannon, E. (ed.), *The European Neighbourhood Policy's Challenges*, Brussels, Peter Lang, 2012; Whitman, R. and Wolff, S. (eds.), *The European Neighbourhood Policy in Perspective: Context, Implementation and Impact*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

⁶ Chaire TOTAL de Politique étrangère de l'Union européenne, *Conférence internationale: Comprendre l'Islam Politique dans les Sociétés Arabes Méditerranéennes: Défis et Perspectives pour la Politique Etrangère de l'UE (24 Février 2012) – Rapport de la Conférence*, Bruges, Collège d'Europe, <http://www.coleurope.eu/totalchair>.

⁷ Martin, M. and Kaldor, M. (eds.), *The European Union and Human Security. External interventions and missions*, Oxon, Routledge, 2009; Tadjbakhsh, S. and Chenoy, A.M., “Human Security: Concepts and Implications”, Routledge, 2007, p. 272.

⁸ Martin, I., “The European Neighbourhood Policy Response to the Socio-Economic Challenges in the Arab Mediterranean Partner Countries”, in E. Lannon (ed.), *The European Neighbourhood Policy's Challenges*, Brussels, P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2012, p. 247.

⁹ See overview in Keukeleire, S. and Delreux, T., *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*, Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2nd ed., 2014.

is also one of the explanations for the gap between the EU's self-perception as a positive power and the EU's image in other parts of the world.¹⁰ This gap not only comes to the fore in scholarly work, but also in global attitude surveys which, for instance, indicate that a favourable view about the EU is expressed by only one third or less of the respondents in Mediterranean countries (such as Turkey, Egypt and Jordan) and emerging powers (China and India).¹¹

2. Towards a Shift in the EU's Foreign Policy Paradigm

Which answers can be formulated to counter the challenges to the EU's relevance? We argue for a shift in the foreign policy paradigm of the EU and of the West in general, consisting of the reconceptualization of "interests" and the adoption of an "outside-in" approach in the conduct and assessment of foreign policy. This implies that EU foreign policy needs to go beyond the predominant foreign policy approaches, which are largely based on the Westphalian model (in which states and elites were at the centre of foreign policy), on the colonial heritage of most Western European countries, as well as on the late 20th century experience (in which Europe and the West perceived themselves as superior to other regions and as the evident point of reference).

Regarding the reconceptualization of interests, we can find inspiration in Jean Monnet's motto after the Second World War, when he pointed to the need to "*transcend the national framework, and conception of national interests*" by adding a European dimension.¹² In the current 21st century context, we can revisit Jean Monnet's motto and point to the need to *transcend the European framework and conception of European interest by adding a global dimension* and by incorporating the interests of regions, states, societies and individuals outside the European borders. Just like thinking outside the (national) box was needed at the start of the European integration process, what is required now is thinking outside the (European) box.

Thinking outside the European box implies that the EU is willing to accept "difference" and to learn about "the other" – this means to learn

and accept differences in interests, priorities, perspectives and sensitivities of other regions, countries and societies. Following Inayatullah and Blaney in their interpretation of Todorov's "Knowledge of Others",¹³ this requires "a heightened consciousness of the dependence of our knowledge on prior judgements (that is, 'prejudice'), the relativity of our own categories, and the historical and cultural (perhaps 'ethnic') specificity of our understanding".¹⁴ In short, it implies a willingness to go beyond the limitations and constraints of "Western ethnocentrism"¹⁵ which characterized the study of foreign policy and of international relations in general.

One of the remedies to overcome Western ethnocentrism, reconceptualize interests and tackle the risk of a growing irrelevance is to adopt an "outside-in" approach in the conduct and analysis of EU foreign policy. This outside-in approach has different facets, with this chapter focussing only briefly on some of these dimensions.¹⁶ The *geographic outside-in* approach implies that the analysis and assessment of the foreign policy of the EU should start from a thorough knowledge of the situation in and context of the "target countries", "recipient countries" or "beneficiary countries" of the foreign policy of the EU (i.e. the Balkans, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Central Africa, etc.). Such a preliminary knowledge of the societies, countries or regions that are the subject of the EU's foreign policy is essential in order to provide the touch-stones needed to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the EU's foreign policy from the perspective of the target society, country or region.

The *polity outside-in* approach means that the centrality of the state and of inter-state relations is not taken for granted in the conduct and analysis of foreign policy. Attention is also paid to other potentially relevant ways to order society and inter-human relations in a persistent way. This can occur on the basis of ethnicity or religion, on the basis of kinship or of other systems of legitimacy and authority to organize large or smaller groups of people (such as kingdoms, chiefdoms, tribes, clans,

¹⁰ Chaban, N. and Holland, M. (eds.), *The European Union and the Asia-Pacific. Media, public and elite perceptions of the EU*, London and New York, Routledge, 2008; Holland, M., Ryan, P. and Chaban, N. (eds.), *The EU Through the Eyes of Asia Volume II: New Cases, New Findings*, New Jersey, World Scientific, 2009; Lucarelli, S. and Fioramonti, L. (eds.), *External Perceptions of the European Union as a Global Actor*, Oxon, Routledge, 2010.

¹¹ Pew Research Center. *China Seen Overtaking U.S. as Global Superpower. 23-Nation Pew Global Attitudes Survey*. Pew Global, 2011, p. 63.

¹² Monnet, J., "A ferment of change", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1962, p. 203.

¹³ Todorov, T., *The Morals of History*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1995, p. 15.

¹⁴ Inayatullah, N. and Blaney, D.L., *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*, London, Routledge, 2004, p. 124.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹⁶ See also Keukeleire, S. and Thépaut, C., "Towards an Outside-in Approach in the analysis of (European) Foreign Policy", Paper presented at the International Conference "The European Union in International Affairs III", Brussels, 3-5 May 2012; Keukeleire, S. and Justaert, A., "Structural Diplomacy, Contextual Difference, and the Process of Learning", Paper for the UACES 40th Anniversary Conference "Exchanging Ideas on Europe: Europe at a Crossroads", Bruges, 6-8 September 2010.

neighbourhoods, or extended families).¹⁷ Acknowledging and understanding these other polities can be of crucial importance to gain inside in the pertinence and impact of foreign policy initiatives.

The *historical outside-in* approach is related to the recognition that other regions, countries or societies can have “alternative developmental schemes” and be subject of different transformative mechanisms and processes than in Europe.¹⁸ Or as Chakrabarty emphasizes in his “Provincializing Europe”: it implies avoiding the generalisation of developments specific to European processes and European assumptions about space, time and sovereignty to the rest of the world.¹⁹

The geographic outside-in approach has implications for the academic analysis of EU foreign policy, leading to what we can label as a *disciplinary outside-in* approach. Specialists working on EU foreign policy – diplomats, civil servants and scholars – have to be aware of the negative consequences of the Western or European ethnocentrism and the Western dominance in the study of foreign policy.²⁰ This points to the importance of incorporating to a larger extent the knowledge and analytical frameworks of non-Western scholars and from other academic disciplines and “areas studies” in particular (Balkan Studies, Middle-East Studies, South-East Asia Studies, etc.). In view of the multidimensional nature of most problems and conflicts there is also a need for an interdisciplinary approach and for more systematically incorporating insights provided by other disciplines than political science or international relations, such as history, development studies, security studies, sociology, and anthropology.

Equally significant is the *linguistic outside-in* approach: the awareness of the importance of strengthening the knowledge of non-Western languages – such as Chinese or Arabic – by European diplomats and scholars. This is essential not merely to understand non-Western coun-

tries and societies, but also to detect concepts, approaches and sensitivities which are foreign to the traditional European or Western linguistic systems, conceptual lenses and cognitive world – but which may be crucial to an understanding of these other societies and cultures.

3. Implications for the EEAS

Adopting an outside-in approach and reconceptualising European interests by adding a global dimension and by incorporating the interests of non-European societies and states has implications for the EU’s foreign policy architecture: for the European External Action Service (EEAS), for the various Directorates-General within the Commission with relevance to the EU’s foreign policy (such as DG DEVCO), for the EU Delegations in third countries, and for the (European) Council, European Parliament and related entities which take and prepare the decisions. The threefold question is whether the EU’s foreign policy framework is sufficiently equipped and adapted to think and act outside the (European) box – in terms of expertise, mandate of its staff and translation of interests in decisions.

A first question is whether the EU’s diplomatic system can rely on sufficient expertise and in-depth knowledge about other countries and societies. The EU not only needs excellent generalists or people with outstanding diplomatic skills, but also country specialists or area specialists with a sound knowledge of and experience in third countries and with a solid network of contacts within these countries. What the EEAS and the EU delegations need are not only diplomats or civil servants specialized in, for instance, the EU’s policy towards China or the Arab world, but specialists in China and the Arab world, with an in-depth knowledge of these countries, their history, societies, value-systems, dynamics and complexities. Related is the question of to what extent the EEAS, EU Delegations and relevant DG’s include sufficient staff that is really fluent in the languages of the countries concerned as a prerequisite for real interaction and dialogue (this means, in our previous examples, Mandarin, Berber, and the many variations of Arabic). A first inquiry learns that this is often not the case in EU Delegations in third countries, with EU diplomats depending often on local staff for translating documents and interpreting conversations and debates among local actors.

A following question is whether diplomats and civil servants can in practice invest sufficient time and energy in the interaction and dialogue with actors in third countries – not only with the elites but also with other segments of societies, including segments of society that do not fit very well within the EU’s value-system. To what extent does the staff in the EEAS and the EU Delegations (including the Head of Delegation)

¹⁷ Migdal, J.S., *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988; Migdal, J.S., *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, 2001; Waeber, O., “Societal security: the concept”, in O. Waeber, B. Buzan, M. Kelstrup & P. Lemaitre (eds.), *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, London, Pinter Publishers, 1993, pp. 17-27.

¹⁸ Delanty, G. and Rumford, C., *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the Implications of Europeanization*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2005, p. 15.

¹⁹ Chakrabarty, D., *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2007, p. 301.

²⁰ Acharya, A. and Buzan, B. (eds.), *Non-Western International Relations Theory. Perspectives on and beyond Asia*, Oxon, Routledge, 2010; Tickner, A.B. and Waeber, O. (eds.), *International Relations Scholarship Around the World*, London/New York, Routledge, 2009; Tickner, A.B. and Blaney, D.L. (eds.), *Thinking International Relations Differently*, London and New York, Routledge, 2012.

have sufficient time for outreach, in view of their important management tasks, their administrative and budgetary responsibilities, as well as the time and energy needed to interact with the many EU actors involved and to find a minimum of internal cohesion? Moreover, staff in Brussels and in third countries responsible for the political dimension is in this context still much more limited than staff responsible for the preparation and management of cooperation and development projects and trade relations.

It is clear that the EU's diplomatic system can already rely on a pool of outstanding diplomats and experts with sometimes long experience in third countries. And it is also obvious that the EU is increasingly paying attention to the need to introduce third country experts in the EEAS and EU Delegations. The questions and remarks formulated in this section are therefore often dismissed by EU diplomats as irrelevant. However, the challenge of adopting an outside-in perspective becomes clear when asking explicit questions about the number of staff in the EEAS in Brussels and in EU Delegations in non-Western countries that are fluent in the local language(s), that have a thorough understanding of the country and society (and not only of the relations between that country or region with the EU), and that also have sufficient time and mandate to interact with broader sections of society. The limited attention to the outside perspectives also appears in the preparation and training of EU diplomats, with most attention going to the internal functioning of the EU and to the bureaucratic procedures and skills needed for working in an EU Delegation.²¹

The last question is whether the EU's policy-making system allows EU diplomats and civil servants to transcend the traditional conception of European interest by incorporating the interests of other states and societies within the EU's own definition of interests. This requires that Ministers and national diplomats within the Council of Ministers, COREPER, Political and Security Committee, and the various working groups accept that complementing an "EU perspective" with a "third country perspective" is essential to increase the external relevance of EU foreign policy. This also underlines the daunting challenge in an EU with 28 member states, in which – in addition to the interests of the EU in general – the interests of the 28 member states and of the EU institutions as well as those of the third country and society are to be taken seriously.

4. The College of Europe: Innovations and Challenges

Before giving some reflections on recent and future dynamics in the College of Europe, it is useful to formulate some thoughts on the academic study of international relations and foreign policy in general. The need to adopt an outside-in approach implies that there is a considerable need for specialists in non-Western regions, countries and societies, and for students who want to focus on the non-European world. A vast number of students follow or have followed Master programmes specialized in European studies and international relations in general. And a major part of these students are focussing (or have focussed attention) on EU foreign policy and the EU's relations with third countries and other regions, leading to a large number of Master's theses, but also PhD theses and post-doctoral research on these subjects. However, only a limited number of these students and researchers are truly specialized in the third country, society or region as such. And only a limited number of them did acquire skills such as reading and speaking fluently the local (non-Western) languages of the country or region that was the subject of their research. This equally means that they are in general obliged to base their research mainly or exclusively on EU-sources and Western academic publications, in view of their inability to use primary resources written in the local language or to conduct interviews in the local language – which also leads to questions about the validity and relevance of the research results. The limited number of specialist in non-European regions and countries is partially the result of the limited importance of "areas studies" in the academic landscape in Europe (with the exception of the UK) and the limited offer of interdisciplinary Master programmes specialized in other regions. Linking this to the before-mentioned need to develop an outside-in approach, this means that it may be of interest for our understanding of EU foreign policy to promote not only "European Studies" but also "Middle East Studies", "Africa Studies", "South-East Asia Studies", etc.

How can we situate the College of Europe within this context? First of all, the College itself was part of the attempts after the Second World War to transcend the conception of national interests by adding a European dimension. Transcending the national framework in educating future European elites was indeed at the heart of the establishment of the College of Europe, which started in 1950 with Professor Hendrik Brugmans as its first rector. The creation of the College of Europe followed the proposal during the 1948 Hague Congress of Salvador de Madariaga to establish a College where university graduates from different European countries could study and also live together.

When looking at the current situation, it becomes obvious that the College of Europe, under the leadership of Rector Paul Demaret, took

²¹ See also Mahncke, D. and Gstöhl, S., "Training European Diplomats", in D. Mahncke and S. Gstöhl, *European Union Diplomacy. Coherence, Unity and Effectiveness*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2012, pp. 241-270.

some major initiatives to move the focus of the College beyond the European borders – with some of these initiatives reflecting aspects of the outside-in approach outlined earlier in this chapter. A first major innovation was the creation of the new Department *EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies* and of the new *Master in EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies*. Significant in this context is the compulsory language course in this Master's programme, with students being able to choose Arabic, Chinese and Russian (in addition to French, German and Spanish). This reflects the acknowledgement of the significance of non-Western language skills to understand EU foreign policy and to adapt the students to the changing global context.

A second innovation is the creation of various academic chairs, which points to the increasing openness of the College of Europe for the outside world: the *InBev-Baillet Latour Chair of European Union-China Relations*; the *European Neighbourhood Policy Chair* in the Natolin campus of the College, which pays attention not only to the Eastern neighbours but also to the neighbouring countries in Northern Africa and the Middle East; and the *TOTAL Chair of EU Foreign Policy*, which explicitly focuses on the development of an outside-in approach in analysing EU foreign policy.

A third change is the increasing number of non-European students that follow the Master programmes in Bruges and Natolin. The presence of non-European students – mostly from the European Neighbourhood countries (with the support of ENP scholarships) and from Asia – is important for the European students too, as the participation of students from Asia and Europe's neighbourhood helps to change the terms of the academic debates at the College and to bring the "outside" into the College of Europe.

It is in this perspective that the recent initiatives of Rector Demaret to strengthen relations with China and other Asian countries are of great importance, as the intensified relations with universities, research institutes and diplomatic schools in Asia will allow the College of Europe to further add a global dimension to its study programmes and research.

The course is thus set for the future. This points to one of the main challenges of the College of Europe and its new rector in the following decade: that is to further develop the initiatives launched by Rector Demaret and to continue the process of transcending the European framework by adding a global dimension. Transcending the European framework may indeed prove to be crucial in the quest for continued relevance – for the College of Europe as well as for EU foreign policy in general.

Has the United States lost Interest in Europe?

American Foreign Policy under the Obama Presidency

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Over the past one-and-a-half decades, without a doubt particularly promoted during the administration of George W. Bush but not only attributable to that administration, observations about an increasing distance, a mutual loss of interest, perhaps even an estrangement between the United States and Europe, have increased.¹ Are such observations justified? Has the United States, have Europeans neglected the relationship? Does more attention to issues outside of the transatlantic relationship imply loss of interest and neglect? Can either side afford such a development?

1. An Historical Legacy

Probably the most frequently quoted passage from Washington's Farewell Address of 1796 – certainly on the part of Europeans – is the first President's warning to the American people to avoid entanglement with European affairs. This is understandable. After all, a deep strand in American history is one of separateness from Europe. The War of Independence brought the United States not only political freedom from the European motherland but also a sense of ideological severance. The

¹ Apart from numerous academic analyses, a vivid example is an article that appeared in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* on 7 November 2012, the day after Barack Obama's re-election: Majid Sattar, "Sehnsucht nach der Welt von gestern. Wie die transatlantische Familie Berlins an ihrer Idee von Amerika festhält".